

NFAC 3894-79

25 July 1979

Memorandum for Dr. Bowie

Subject: Cuban-Soviet Intentions in Central America

1. In the event you have not seen it, we call your attention to the attached Chicago Tribune article on Cuba-Soviet "Military Collaboration." According to this article, Senior Ramon Sanchez-Parodi, the head of the Cuban Interest Section in Washington, in recent public remarks to reporters at a meeting in Washington stated that:

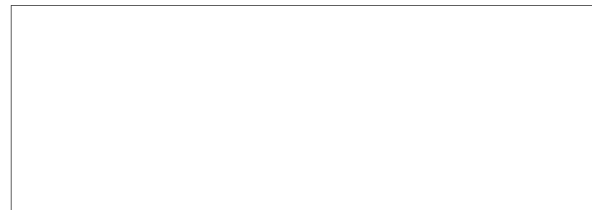
a. Cuban-Soviet ties "will continue to increase in all fields, including military collaboration" and that this applied "across the board", that is, both internationally as well as within Cuba.

b. Support (Cuban-Soviet) for the Sandinistas included arms and political advice.

c. Cuba intends to support revolutionary forces in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras with assistance "of all sorts", including material support, advice and diplomatic backing.

2. Assuming that the press report is accurate, Mr. Sanchez publicly confirmed what the Intelligence Community has been reporting for the past several months.

3. It is likely that Mr. Sanchez reflects official Cuban thinking and that the Cuban government, perhaps with at least tacit Soviet approval, believes the US government to be incapable or unwilling to take effective action to counter Cuban moves against other Central American governments or other governments in the Caribbean region.



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4. "In any event, Mr. Sanchez' message to the United States, Latin America and the world is blunt and blatant. The political and psychological impact of this message on the US public as well as US stature and prestige internationally could be profound. The Panel suggests that, if you have not already done so, you bring this to the attention of the DCI with the recommendation that it be the subject of an early briefing for the President.




William Leonhart

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Attachment:
As stated

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THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE
21 July 1979

Cuba-Soviet 'military collaboration' promised by Castro's envoy to U.S.

By John Maclean

Chicago Tribune Press Service

WASHINGTON—Cuba intends to increase its "military collaboration" with the Soviet Union both within Cuba and internationally, Ramon Sanchez-Parodi, head of the Cuban interest section here said Friday.

Sanchez said the fall of the Somoza government in Nicaragua was a "signal" to other Latin American dictatorships that they, too, may fall. He said Cuba intended to support guerrilla insurrections in those countries, just as it did in Nicaragua.

He named Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras as countries where Cuba was providing assistance "of all sorts" to revolutionary forces. This included material support, advice, and diplomatic backing in international forums.

Sanchez, Cuba's top diplomat in the United States, made his remarks at a

breakfast meeting with reporters sponsored by Foreign Policy magazine.

HE CONFIRMED the outline of a Central Intelligence Agency memorandum on Cuban activities in the Caribbean disclosed earlier this month by the Tribune. The memorandum said Fidel Castro was supporting guerrilla movements in Nicaragua and other Central American countries.

He also blamed the U.S. for causing the surge of refugee boatpeople from Viet Nam. He said U.S. intervention in Viet Nam had been a worse crime than anything done by "Somoza or Hitler."

Regarding reports of increased numbers of Soviet military personnel in Cuba, Sanchez said Cuban-Soviet ties "will continue to increase in all fields, including military collaboration."

Asked whether he meant international or only within Cuba, he replied:

"Across the board."

SANCHEZ SAID Cuba supports the junta which has replaced former President Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua. He said Cuban support for the Sandinista rebels increased as the civil struggle intensified in past months. But, he said, Cuba does not intend to impose its own social system upon another country.

He said Cuba had advised the Sandinista guerrillas to seek the broadest support in order to avoid military intervention by the U.S. He also said Cuba would consider giving military aid to the new Nicaraguan government, but indicated the matter had not been discussed in any detail.

He said support for the Sandinistas included arms and political advice, but he declined comment on the kind of arms or the way in which they were delivered to the Nicaraguan guerrillas. The CIA reported in May that Cuba fun-

nelled arms to the Sandinistas aboard Panamanian air force planes.

SANCHEZ, WHO came to the U.S. when Cuba and the U.S. established interest sections in each other's capitals in 1977, said Cuba still hoped to normalize relations with the U.S. But he said movement toward that end has not been "up to expectations."

The U.S. has said that no normalization of relations is possible as long as Cuba has fighting men on the African continent.

Sanchez said Cuba has an agreement to keep troops in Angola "as long as needed" and will provide aid and advice to "liberation fronts" in Africa, but would confine troop commitments to requests from African governments.

He indicated aid would be given to insurgency groups in southern Africa.

SANCHEZ SAID Cuba intends to release an additional 500 political prisoners next week. This, he reported, would bring the total released since January to 2,400.

About 800 to 900 released prisoners still are awaiting processing by the U.S. as refugees, Sanchez said. Cuba has said it intends to release about 3,000 prisoners eventually.

Sanchez said Huber Matos, the most famous of Cuba's political prisoners, will be included in the release program.

